financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them every year under the schemes for Product/ Infrastructure Development of Circuits/Destinations and Assistance to Large Revenue Generating projects.

On the basis of project proposals submitted and appraised as per guidelines, the following projects have been sanctioned for development of Somnath and Dwarka:

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl. No.	Name of the project	Year of sanction	Amount sanctioned
1.	Development of area around Somnath Temple	2003-04	500.00
2.	Additional works in Somnath Temple	2003-04	48.81
3.	Integrated development of tourist circuit on the sector Junagadh-Veraval-Porbandar-Dwarka	2006-07	329.83

During the 10th Plan period, a total of Rs. 3366.27 lakh has been sanctioned for the State of Gujarat (till February, 2007).

Downfall in foreign tourists

2382. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry is aware of steep downfall in the volume of international tourists arriving in the country thereby affecting the tourism industry;

(b) if so, what is the estimated loss of foreign exchange; and

(c) whether Government are taking any step to reassure foreign tourists on security and other related aspects?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) There has not been any fall in the volume of international tourists in

the country in recent years. In 2006, the foreign tourist arrivals to India registered a growth of 13% over 2005. Even during the first two months of 2007, the foreign tourist arrivals have grown by about 15% over the corresponding period in 2006.

(c) The steps taken by the Ministry of Tourism for the security of foreign tourists include:—

* Requesting the State Governments to set up Tourist Police and deploy them at important/popular tourist destimations;
* Granting recognition/approval to Guides/Travel Agents and Transport Operators in order to standardize the service and to avoid unscrupulous activities, fleecing, over-charging etc.;
* Launching of a social awareness campaign "Atithi Devo Bhavah" to sensitize the stakeholders in tourism, and the public in general, to provide the inbound tourists with a sense of being welcomed by and to the country;
* Setting up of Tourist Arrival Centres, Reception Centres, Interpretation Centres.

Tax holiday for tourism projects

2383. SHRI P.R. RAJAN:
SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of conditional 10-year tax holiday proposed to be declared for all tourism projects in the country;

(b) whether the proposed tax holiday is going to start from 1st April, 2007;

(c) if so, whether her Ministry propose to put a condition that, at least, some portion of profit may be earmarked for promotion of tourism in the country; and

(d) whether her Ministry propose to favour nationalising sales tax in the tourism sector of States also?